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STUDENT-RUN INITIATIVE TO BAN CRISIS PREGNANCY CENTERS HOLDS PROTEST AT INVOLVEMENT FAIR

By RACHEL LU
Editor at Large

TOM NEVINS/THE MIDDLEBURY CAMPUS

Students protested at the Sept. 20 Student Involvement Fair in an effort to ban Crisis Pregnancy Centers from campus.

Around 30 students organized outside The Feminist Resource Center at Chellis House on Tuesday, Sept. 20 and marched to McCullough Lawn to protest The Women's Center's participation in the Student Involvement Fair.

According to materials handed out by organizers at the event, The Women's Center, currently located in the former Middlebury Planned Parenthood at 102 Court Street, is recognized as a Crisis Pregnancy Center (CPC). CPCs are anti-abortion facilities that disguise themselves as abortion clincs. The Planned Parenthood in Middlebury closed last May, making the closest locations to campus those in Rutland, Vt. and Burlington, Vt.

Elissa Asch '22.5 and Bella Cady '22.5 were co-organizers of the protest. Asch said she became engaged with CPC research and activism through the Public Feminism Fellowship, a program sponsered by Chellis House and the Gender, Sexuality and Feminist Studies Department. After the Supreme Court overturned Roe v. Wade this summer, Asch founded the NESCAC Coalition to Ban CPCs.

The NESCAC Coalition to Ban CPCs wrote a petition to gain support from NESCAC schools to ban CPC advertising and involvement on campuses. The Middlebury Coalition saw The Women's Center's participation at the Student Involvement Fair as an opportunity for protest.

The student protest was regulated by "Demonstration Regulations" in the Middlebury Handbook, which requires that students submit an event scheduling request, meet with Public Safety and Events Management to review Middlebury policies and adhere to certain times and locations determined by the college for their demonstrations.

The students were designated a protest area by the college on McCullough Lawn, where protesters held up posters and handed out zines with information about CPCs.

According to Julia Ferrante, associate vice president for public affairs, all registered non-profit agencies in Addison County, including The Women's Center, can register in advance to participate in the Middlebury Student Involvement Fair.

"We do not select organizations based on their area of focus or viewpoints they express," Ferrante said. "Middlebury unequivocally supports the right of speakers to speak and be heard, even if we as a community choose different values and vehemently disagree with a speaker's expression."

Assistant Professor of Gender, Sexuality and Feminist Studies Carly Thomsen pointed to the hypocrisy that while CPCs are entitled to be on campus for freedom of expression, student protesters are confined to certain areas for demonstrating.

"Any outside orgs coming to campus and circulating medical misinformation should not be allowed to do that, especially in this political moment when abortion is not protected federally, and there is no Planned Parenthood in town," Thomsen said. "Middlebury still wouldn't prevent CPCs from coming on campus? Seems extremely shortsighted to me."

Some Middlebury students have reported being misled by information from the Center.

Cady first learned about CPCs while seeking reproductive healthcare in town and came across the free resources that The Women's Center offered. Cady later learned from friends that The Women's Center provided misleading medical information.

Scholars found that 80% of CPC websites contain misleading information, most commonly by establishing link between abortion and mental health issues, according to the protesters' zine. The zine also notes that CPCs are not compliant with the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) although they gather private medical information about their clients.

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New tea and shake shop opens in Middlebury, sells Herbalife products

By SAM LIPIN
Sports Editor

The once vacant storefront at 56 College Street is empty no longer. It is now home to Ignite Nutrition, a shop selling protein shakes, protein-based coffee and energy teas — and they are using products from Herbalife Nutrition, a well-known multi-level marketing (MLM) company.

The Campus has confirmed that the business is selling Herbalife products by looking through the items available to order on their app, "Engage," the seller for which is listed in the App Store as "Herbalife Ltd, Inc." Ignite Nutrition offers Herbalife probiotics, aloe and flavorings as add-ins to the drinks available for order through "Engage." And a recent TikTok on the business's account, @ignitenutrition802, showed them making a drink with Herbalife's "High Protein Iced Coffee Drink Mix."

Co-owners Karen Dumas and BobbiJo Jones spoke to The Campus in an earlier interview focused on the opening of their new business, but they declined an in-person follow-up interview and did not respond to three emails requesting comment about Ignite Nutrition's use of Herbalife products.

Multi-level marketing, also known as network marketing or direct marketing, is a sales strategy where products cannot be purchased through retail stores, but rather through privately-owned shops that buy the product in bulk. Accordingly, Herbalife distributors — and other MLM distributors — are not employees of the larger corporation, but customers who encourage patrons of their storefront to do the same.

In Herbalife's case, customers — or "members" as they are sometimes referred to — are encouraged to open "nutritional clubs." At these storefronts, distributors typically sell Herbalife products and encourage other customers to get involved.

Founded in 1980 by Mark Hughes and originally endorsed by public figures such as Chuck Norris and Madeleine Albright, the dietary supplement company has generated a considerable amount of controversy over the years.

In 2016, the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) sued Herbalife for participating in "unfair and deceptive acts or practices." The lawsuit settled with Herbalife paid $200 million to distributors who were misled to believe they would earn a substantial income.

The FTC lawsuit addressed the practices of the Herbalife Nutrition company; there is nothing illegal about shops selling Herbalife products. In reality, prior to 2016 the majority of Herbalife distributors either made no profit or lost money, according to the official complaint filed by the FTC.

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Eujin Chae '25 featured on SportsCenter Top 10

COURTESY OF TROY MCFARLANE

Eujin Chae '25 (third from right) stands with his teammates before a match.

By CHARLES CROUNSE
Senior Sports Editor

It's not often that a Division III athlete finds themself being broadcast on a nationwide network in front of millions of viewers. But last Wednesday, Sept. 21, that is exactly what happened to Eujin Chae '25.

In the dying embers of a match against Framingham State University, Chae lined up a corner kick on the far end of South Street Field. The game was 3–1 in favor of the Panthers and the clock showed just forty seconds remaining, meaning a Middlebury win was all but certain. But Chae, who had already assisted a goal earlier in the second half, wanted to put the exclamation mark on the win.

In a way that can only be described as David Beckham-esque, Chae curved his corner kick into play, over the crowd of players waiting inside the six-yard box, and into the top right corner of the net. The next morning, he awoke to find his goal had been named the fifth best play of the day on ESPN's SportsCenter Top 10.

"It was a surreal feeling," Chae said after learning of his achievement.

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Clifford Symposium introduces first work from conflict transformation grant

By RYAN McELROY
Staff Writer

This year's Clifford Symposium, titled "Conflict Transformation," focused on understanding what conflict transformation looks like through courses, research and community service carried out by Middleburyfaculty and students.

The Clifford Symposium, named after Professor of History Emeritus Nicholas R. Clifford, brings the Middlebury community together every fall to discuss and reflect on a chosen subject. The topic for this year's symposium considered how the ideas in conflict transformation can be implemented at Middlebury following a $25 million grant for the Kathryn Wasserman Davis Collaborative in Conflict Transformation last spring.

The symposium opened on Thursday, Sept. 22 with the Woodin Environmental Studies Colloquium, a series of weekly talks held by the Environmental Studies Department. The panel featured four Middlebury professors speaking about how this transformation could be understood by learning about examples from their various departments such as English, Environmental Studies, Geography and Economics.

John Paul Lederach, professor emeritus at the University of Notre Dame and senior fellow at Humanity United, gave the keynote address on Sept. 22 about his leadership on global peacebuilding efforts and reimagining conflict through hope. Lederach introduced the concept of the "200-year present," in which he asked the audience to imagine their lives' impact throughout centuries, to convey their power to create change and impact people.

"Take two numbers. The number of the decade of the oldest person you knew was born compared with the number of how far out the youngest person in your extended family might live... and subtract one from the other. In my case, that's 1860 and 2110. That's 250 years," Lederach said. "These are the lives and the people that have touched you, and these are the lives and the people that you will touch. It's an extraordinary thing to imagine our location across centuries."

After grounding the audience in imagining their potential to impact centuries, Lederach described his peacebuilding work in the 1980s to bring together 30 leaders from Central America facing conflicts in their nations. Lederach was initially challenged by these communities to consider that, in seeking to solve their problems quickly, he would not actually create constructive transformation.

Lederach also spoke of his work in Colombia as it emerged from 60 years of civil war with the new "truth-seeking commission" that sought to understand the violence so that it would not be repeated. Lederach shared that the commission made many important developments in how they acknowledged the suffering of both local and displaced Colombians, but the critical piece of their work to prevent future violence was the hope they held that change was possible.

"I cannot tell you how many times I have been told by my dear friends in the academic world, policymakers and philanthropy [that] hope is not a strategy — but I have never seen a significant process of transformation without hope," he said.

Friday's events opened with a talk on racial conflict by Khuram Hussain, vice president for equity and inclusion, who spoke about the small college town of Geneva, N.Y. and how it could serve as a model for Middlebury to transform our community relationship. Hussain described moving from a system where his school and students work for their town to one where the college works with the community in dialogue as equal partners to create change for the places and people that were previously invisible.

"Can we find ourselves moving away from this subjective vertical [hierarchy] of power, wherever we fall in it, to one that is horizontal? Can we relieve ourselves of the burden of having to live in a world that distributes power, authority, legitimacy, access to resources in vertical ways?" Hussain said. "This is really simple stuff. Where can we show up in contact with you, instead of doing things for you?"

The Clifford Symposium also featured student recipients of conflict transformation fellowships and grants last summer, who presented posters describing their research projects and community engagement. One of the central goals of the Kathryn Wasserman Davis Collaborative in Conflict Transformation is community engagement, leading the program to fund 21 summer internships as part of the Privilege & Poverty Academic Cluster to examine conflict's relationship to poverty and other issues.

Other events on Friday Sept. 23 included a talk by Professor James Chase Sanchez about his documentary on sexual abuse in boarding schools and his personal experience with the subject. Through this perspective, Sanchez advocated for non-defensive communication to reclaim power through openly sharing information.

This was followed by a panel discussion of employees from different departments such as the Middlebury Athletic Department, the Scott Center for Spiritual and Religious Life and the Center for Community Engagement. These speakers shared their experiences with conflict transformation in their work at Middlebury, speaking about how the disruptions conflict creates can actually improve the liberal arts education Middlebury strives for.

Friday night featured a dance-theater performance, "Same But Different," by Christal Brown, associate professor of dance, and Lida Winfield, visiting assistant professor of dance, that explored the ideas of race, gender and age. through the lens of their artistic expression and communal existence.

The symposium concluded on Saturday morning with a series of sampling sessions intended to expose participants to different areas of conflict transformation, such as restorative practices, intercultural communications and aikido, a form of Japanese martial arts.

This year's symposium sought to build a foundation for conflict transformation at Middlebury over the seven-year period of the grant. Reflecting on the work that remains to be done in this field and how Middlebury can contribute to a better future, Lederach spoke to the possibility of human hope and imagination healing our 200-year present.

"This could be the century of whether or not our imagination about our humanity as a global family will lead us in the direction of finding the survival of our species," Lederach said. "I think this is the century of transformation. We will either get it, or we won't."

COURTESY PHOTO

Middlebury professors reflect on state of abortion in "Post-Roe America" panel

By MADELEINE KAPTEIN
Copy Editor

A panel titled "Forecasts for a Post-Roe America: Three Disciplinary Perspectives on What Comes Next," hosted by Vice President of Equity and Inclusion Khuram Hussain on Tuesday, Sept. 20, featured three professors speaking on the future of abortion access.

The panel featured Bertram Johnson, professor of American politics; Caitlin Myers, professor of economics and co-director for the Middlebury Initiative for Data and Digital Methods; and Carly Thomsen, professor of gender, sexuality & feminist studies. The professors provided insight and research on the consequences of the Supreme Court's June 2022 decision on Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization, which effectively overturned Roe v. Wade.

Johnson's talk focused on the role of abortion in the upcoming midterm congressional elections this November. He said that despite abortion being an issue people care intensely about — statistically more so than in past years — it will have a very narrow effect on the results of the midterms. According to Johnson, abortion remains a small factor compared to other factors such as the economy.

Historically, the president's party often loses seats in Congress in midterm elections, especially with a lower presidential approval rating, according to Johnson. President Biden's current approval rating is approximately 43%, so Democrats appear to be on track to lose the House of Representatives regardless of the people's stance on abortion, Johnson said. He suggested that abortion is more likely to make a difference in the Senate, especially in states with close races such as Wisconsin, Georgia, Nevada, New Hampshire and Arizona.

In his talk, Johnson also emphasized that for the next two years and beyond, abortion laws will be a state policy issue and not a national issue. Political scientists' data shows that the most conservative states' policies have become more conservative and the most liberal states' policies have become more liberal. This is the result of advocates pushing for policies in the areas that support them, Johnson said.

States like Vermont and California will be voting this year to codify the right to reproductive freedom in their state constitutions. These amendments "would protect abortion rights explicitly, in a way that would be very difficult for a court to interpert otherwise," Johnson said. Abortion-related measures are on ballots in a record-high six states this fall, as advocates seek to add explict bans or protections for abortion to state constitutions.

Myers' section of the panel focused on her and her teams' findings from using statistical tools to assess causal effects of limiting abortion access, especially changes in travel distance for women seeking abortions. The average distance for a woman in the United States to reach an abortion provider was 33 miles in May 2022, when Roe v. Wade was still in effect. Myers and her research team calculated that once all the states that are predicted to ban abortion have done so, that number will increase to 282 miles. Consequently, she expects to see a 3.5% increase in births in the affected regions.

Myers emphasized that the number of births was not the focus, but rather that the women who would most likely be unable to access abortions would be the poorest and most vulnerable women in the deep South and Midwest.

"This is not a story about national birth shocks," Myers said. "It is about inequality."

Myers and her student research team found that there will be a strain in abortion appointment availability in states where abortion is legal, so even women with the means to travel out of state may still be forced to give birth.

Thomsen spoke at the panel about Crisis Pregnancy Centers (CPCs), organizations that often provide false medical information to dissuade women from getting abortions. These centers target the poor and working-class by offering "free" resources like pregnancy tests, according to Thomsen. She reported that 80% of CPC websites listed in official state resource directories provide false medical information. These websites falsely state that abortion leads to breast cancer, infertility and mental health issues, she said.

Thomsen and her research team mapped out CPCs and abortion facilites across the country and found that in a post-Dobbs United States, the number of people living closer to a CPC than to an abortion facility almost doubled. The percentage of Black people living closer to a CPC than an abortion facility more than doubled, and Native Americans would live closer to CPCs than any other ethnic group.

Students held a demonstration at the Student Involvement Fair on Sept. 20 in response to the college allowing Middlebury's CPC, The Women's Center, to have a presence at the fair. Through the Public Feminisms Fellowship, a program sponsered by Chellis House and the Gender, Sexuality and Feminist Studies Department, Elissa Asch '22.5 and the other fellows founded the NESCAC Coalition to Ban CPCs, which includes at least eight schools this summer. Asch and her co-organizers began contacting administrators, asking people to sign their petition and accumulating support before the semester even started.

Professor Thomsen advised the student organizers through their process. "The materials they put together for the protest were thoroughly researched, they were compelling and they were accurate. We cannot say the same thing about the materials that CPCs hand out," she said. She also said that the college should anticipate backlash when they invite dangerous public health risks like CPCs onto campus.

Thomsen first learned about CPCs when she was an undergraduate student participating in a graduate student's thesis project on CPCs. The team was sent into CPCs with scripts and took careful note of the organizations' responses to the scripts. The alarming responses she was given catalyzed her activism. As a PhD student at UCSB, her group successfully banned CPCs from advertising on campus — the first and only time this has ever happened at any college or university.

Thomsen wished to emphasize the larger harmful impact that CPCs have on women's health.

"I think people in Vermont think that because of the amendment that we're voting on, people have a false sense of security about abortion access," she said. "[CPCs] spread medical misinformation, but the negative ways and inaccurate ways that they talk about abortion contributes to anti-abortion ideology."

Middlebury drops to #11 in recent U.S. News and World Report ranking

By MANDY BERGHELA
Contributing Writer

The U.S. News & World Report recently released their 2022–23 Best Liberal Arts College rankings — and Middlebury College was no longer in the top 10. The college now shares the number 11 spot with Washington and Lee University in Lexington, Va.

U.S. News bases their rankings on 17 factors, including social mobility, undergraduate academic ranking, financial resources and standardized testing. The report uses quantifiable admissions data and does not consider athletic or social life when determining the rankings.

Admissions officers are also aware of the role college rankings play in the application process for high school students.

Dean of Admissions Nicole Curvin said that interest in Middlebury has grown significantly in the last five years and remains exceptionally high.

"Middlebury has had a record number of applications and our applicant pool has increased by 39% in the past two years, while getting admitted to Middlebury has become a more selective process — we reached a low of 15% for the Class of 2026," Curvin said.

"Although rankings are just one measure, each publication or organization that ranks colleges has its own method of assessing value," said Sarah Ray, director of media relations. "Our priority is to fulfill our academic mission — to prepare students to lead engaged, consequential and creative lives, contribute to their communities, and address the world's most challenging problems."

Ivan Valerio '26 did not consider Middlebury's ranking when applying in high school, but rather the liberal arts qualities that Middlebury could offer, such as small class sizes and course opportunities that would not have been available elsewhere.

"It is just a number based on an arbitrary system in which most people don't actually understand how it works," Valerio said. "The number itself doesn't matter as much, and I honestly don't care that our school dropped a bit, my love for the school is only rising in time, and I would still apply again if I could."

Natalie Penna '24 shared similar sentiments.

"Rankings don't matter to me at all. Middlebury's still a renowned school despite its fall in rankings, and nothing has changed in the school to make it go down. Overall, my experience at Midd has not changed for the worse in the time I've been here," she said.

Some students believe that schools are completely unrankable.

"On what basis can you actually rank a college? Columbia University was ranked number two last year in top universities, and dropped to 18 because they found discrepancies in their data. How can that even happen with any level of accuracy?" Liam Morris '26 said. "Everybody has their own experiences at different institutions. You can't rank my experience and compare it to someone else's."

COLLEGE IMPLEMENTS NEW MASK-OPTIONAL POLICY, REMOVES COVID-19 CASE DASHBOARD

By COLE CHAUDHARI
Contributing Writer

Tom Nevins/The Middlebury Campus
The Parton Center for Health and Wellness still requires masking.

The beginning of the fall semester at Middlebury has ushered in a new iteration of Covid-19 guidelines, which are less restrictive than those of the past two years and suggest a return to a sense of normalcy on campus.

"The Covid-19 outlook is an optimistic one for our campus and the greater community," Peluso said in his email. "We have learned a great deal about pandemic management in these past couple of years."

Among the new guidelines are an updated mask policy, which gives individuals a choice regarding the use of masks but allows faculty and individual departments to mandate the use of masks in gatherings, meetings and other scenarios where they deem them necessary. Additionally, masks continue to be required in the Parton Center for Health and Wellness, during the 10-day Covid-19 recovery period and for those in isolation or quarantine when leaving the room for permissible reasons.

The requirements for isolation have also been amended in accordance with updated recommendations from the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). For those who have tested positive for Covid-19, the isolation period lasts five days, beginning on "Day Zero" — the day when symptoms were first observed or when the positive test was taken. Those who have tested positive for Covid-19 must continue to get to-go meals and wear a mask around others for an additional five days after their isolation period has concluded.

A notable change from the previous year includes the omission of the Covid-19 case tracking dashboard from the college's website, which was used to update the Middlebury community on the number of student and faculty cases.

In an email to The Campus, Chief Health Officer and College Physician Mark Peluso explained the college's reasoning for not continuing to update the Covid-19 case dashboard this fall.

"Online dashboards have fallen out of favor at many institutions largely due to changes in viral transmission dynamics, vaccination effects and an emphasis on CDC community level metrics such as hospitalization rates and capacity," Peluso said. "In general, home testing availability led to diminished accuracy of the many dashboards, and thus diminished utility."

At Amherst College, a peer institution to Middlebury, the Covid-19 dashboard is updated every business day with the number of self-reported and PCR tests for their faculty, staff and students. At the University of Vermont (UVM), however, the dashboard was discontinued this fall and routine surveillance testing is not available on campus.

Peluso further explained that the policies of the college with regard to reporting cases followed the Vermont Department of Health's decision to move away from a more granular case count method and into a more holistic, weekly reporting method.

The college's current Covid-19 policies have been welcomed by many in the student body. Samuel Robertson '26 felt that the flexibility of the masking and social distancing policies was quite reasonable and a hopeful remembrance of what school was like prior to the pandemic, but noted that the burden of responsibility to keep others safe falls almost entirely upon the students now.

"When I came to Midd, I expected the Covid-19 policies to be more stringent. I was surprised by how lax it is, but I think it makes sense — we're all ready to go back to normal and it seems like the administration thought it through," Robertson said. "It's still a little disconcerting to find that our individual decisions are really the only thing preventing us from getting Covid-19. I myself had to choose not to ride in a car with someone who, very recently, had had Covid-19, and that was kind of weird."

Christopher Fridlington '24 commended the revision to the policies, and said he felt that ending mandatory-masking and moving to a more individual approach is the correct trajectory for the school. He said the changes would alleviate confusion resulting from what he considered the relative inconsistency of last year's Covid-19 requirements.

"It's also been nice to be able to see the facial expressions of my peers and professors in classes," Fridlington added. "I've noticed that professors are more aware of what we are or are not understanding based on our expressions and have made adjustments in their instruction accordingly."

But with students and other Middlebury community members continuing to test positive for Covid-19, many do not feel it is time to fully relax restrictions. Some faculty have continued to require masks in their classrooms. The Robert A. Jones '59 House, home to the Rohatyn Center for Global Affairs, still requires everyone to wear face coverings while inside. Additionally, the admissions office at Emma Willard House mandates masks for visitors, staff and students.

STUDENT-RUN INITIATIVE TO BAN CRISIS PREGNANCY CENTERS HOLDS PROTEST AT INVOLVEMENT FAIR

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Tom Nevins/The Middlebury Campus

"It is unsettling that there are resources in town that are advertised as equitable, but they are not actually what they claim to be," Cady said.

Thomsen recently co-authored an op-ed in The New York Times called "Pregnant? Need Help? They have an Agenda." According to the op-ed, the number of abortion clinics have decreased in the U.S. from more than 2,700 in 1978 to around 785 today, while the number of CPCs has increased.

"CPCs are responsible for spreading anti-abortion sentiments, and for contributing to misinformation about abortion that leads people to think it's far more dangerous and damaging than it actually is," Thomsen told The Campus.

Thomsen has been involved with CPC research and activism since she was an undergraduate student in the early 2000s. Over the last 20 years, Thomsen said CPCs' strategies to misinform and confuse have remained consistent. For example, they set up near abortion clinics or buildings that used to be abortion clinics in an attempt to trick and intercept people seeking abortions. However, CPCs have also broadened their reach.

"CPCs have become sneakier, more sophisticated in their strategies," Thomsen said. "They are employing mobile strategies such as buses and vans that target marginalized communities. Technology has enabled new strategies, allowing them to target advertising in a more complex way."

Joanie Praamsma, executive director of The Women's Center in Middlebury, declined an interview with The Campus. Instead, she sent an email statement to The Campus in regards to the protest.

"The demonstrators certainly drew a large crowd of students that we may not have otherwise had the opportunity to interact with," Praamsma said in the email. "Many of them that we talked with asked great questions and were genuinely interested in learning about our services and how we conduct them. I appreciated their desire to hear directly from us versus the extremely general, and non-specific to The Women's Center in Middlebury, accusations that were being made. Unfortunately the ones leading the demonstration and the petition to ban our Center have refused, and continue to refuse, to speak directly with anyone at our Center about their concerns."

According to Asch, organizers have not been approached by The Women's Center.

"Organizers of this recent demonstration have never refused a conversation with, or been approached by, anyone from the local CPC (The Women's Center)," Asch said in a text response to The Campus. "Students, faculty and staff have had detailed exchanges with the director of the CPC over the last several years. We have even provided her with the free service of going through their website and telling them exactly what is inaccurate. But none of these exchanges have encouraged The Women's Center to change their deceptive practices."

Thomsen believes that the concerns scholars and activists have raised about CPCs are not an issue of being pro-life or pro-choice, it is an issue of medical misinformation.

"I would say that everybody should oppose CPCs regardless of their positions on abortion," Thomsen said.

Asch and Cady were pleased that the protest successfully raised awareness around CPCs at the college, and they hope that their demonstration will prompt the college to take action in the upcoming Student Involvement Fair this spring.

"In our community, people have donated to CPCs not realizing what they are, felt targeted by a CPC and had problems with CPCs in their work lives," Asch said. "It's clear that this is not just a Middlebury campus issue, and we look forward to working on this as a community issue."

Tom Nevins/The Middlebury Campus

Vermont orchards welcome students back

By SYLVIE SHURE
Contributing Writer

Addison County apple orchards are now open for the season, offering apple picking, food stands and musical performances. In addition to being a classic New England fall activity, apple picking grants Vermonters a way to support local businesses and local food production.

Many pick-your-own orchards are regarded as institutions in Vermont communities. According to Rob Rogers, co-owner of Woodman Hill Orchard in Vergennes, they are both a social experience and a shopping experience.

"People come with friends, with family, much more than they would to the grocery store. It does seem to bring people together," Rogers told The Campus.

Beyond providing a place for socializing, orchards also bring an awareness of local food production systems.

"It's important to make sure people see where their food comes from and the process that's involved," Barney Hodges, co-owner of Sunrise Orchards, told The Campus. "We get kind of complacent when we just go to the supermarket and pick our food off the shelf. There's a lot of work that goes into food production, and it's risky and expensive."

Sunrise Orchards is a large, wholesale orchard in Cornwall, Vt., that just recently opened their retail stand. They sell apples to Middlebury College and throughout the northeast. According to Hodges, local food producers like Sunrise are vital to regional food systems.

"It's important that every region has local food production and local food purchases," he said. "Seeing food go back into the community locally is a really big part of how we feed the population."

In Vermont, apple picking season typically stretches from late August through late October. This year, the dry late summer weather led to smaller apples early in the season. According to Ashley Charron, farm store manager at Happy Valley Orchard in Middlebury, the rocky start to the season was cause for alarm for some orchards, but increased rainfall has helped.

Rain can pose its own threats to a crop, though. According to Hodges, rainy weather makes harvesting difficult, and as a result many apples are not picked in time.

Weather is a major factor in the success of a given year's crop. Too much or too little rain can impact the quality of both the apples and their harvest.

"Hail can cut the apples and ruin the tree," Hodges added. "There's a threat from weather until [the apples] are picked and under cover."

Woodman Hill Orchard has also experienced a smaller than average harvest, though Rogers explained that a small harvest is not necessarily a bad thing. Sometimes, a harvest with a higher number of apples will have lower-quality, smaller apples on average. This year's crop, he said, is of high quality.

Despite the rain, the pick-your-own season has been busy, and Middlebury students are already visiting the local orchards. According to Charron, Middlebury students usually come to the orchard in groups affiliated with clubs or in activities led by mentors.

Julia Levin '24, a board member of Middlebury Hillel, helped lead an excursion with a group of Hillel students to Happy Valley Orchard last fall. "We went and we picked apples; it was beautiful out," Levin told The Campus. In addition to taking advantage of the fall weather, Levin recalled the draw of fresh food: apple cider, apple butter and apple cider donuts.

Following the trip, Hillel used the apples to prepare food for the club, including apples and honey for Rosh Hashanah and apple sauce for Chanukah. Levin said she would recommend apple picking as a club activity.

"It's fun; it's Vermont; it's fall; it's beautiful — and it's great to support local businesses," she said.

Vermont orchards often collaborate with other businesses, including other orchards, to support local food production.

"Other farm stands come to us to sell our apples. We're always willing to do that for them to keep things local," Charron said about the practices of Happy Valley. Orchards also sell apples to one another to be used in cider.

In an effort to foster a sense of community, Woodman Hill Orchard partners with local businesses to offer their products at the orchard's farm stand, such as maple syrup and honey.

"As a newer business, we are becoming gradually more known in the community," Rogers said. "We are very appreciative of our repeat customers."

The orchards also host events unrelated to apple picking throughout the fall season. Happy Valley holds free comedy nights or musical performances each weekend in September and October. Sunrise Orchards is currently featuring the sculptures of Jay Lagemann as a walk-through exhibit in the orchard and offers a lunch special every weekend.

ABIGAIL CHANG/THE MIDDLEBURY CAMPUS

Happy Valley Orchard (pictured) is located in Middlebury.

New tea and shake shop opens in Middlebury, sells Herbalife products

Continued from Page 1

Herbalife was also forced to restructure certain business operations that the FTC found were more focused on recruiting distributors than on the sale of the product itself.

Owners Dumas and Jones told The Campus more about their new business, which opened on Aug. 18, in a previous interview, before The Campus was aware of Ignite's use of Herbalife products.

Before opening Ignite Nutrition, Dumas and Jones spent a combined 61 years working for McDonald's. Dumas was a supervisor in charge of five restaurants across Vermont and New Hampshire and Jones was a store manager at the McDonald's in Middlebury.

"We decided we wanted to go off on our own," Dumas, who first trained Jones as a junior manager nearly fifteen years ago, told The Campus on Thursday, Sept. 15. "We did this because it's more laidback, it's relaxing. We [can] talk to our guests and take the time we wanted to."

Neither Dumas nor Jones is originally from Middlebury. However, the connections they already had from working in the area and the store's central location between the college and downtown Middlebury made the decision to open Ignite at 56 College Street an obvious choice.

The menu includes 30 different flavors of protein shakes, each of which has 24 grams of protein and six to 10 grams of sugar. It also features iced coffees with protein and a large assortment of sugar-free iced teas, which can be made to four different caffeine levels — "lit," "boosted," "half caff" or no caffeine.

But by calling some of their protein smoothies "Meal-Replacement Shakes," Ignite's menu has garnered the attention of the student group Middlebury Students Promoting Eating-Disorder Awareness and Knowledge (MIDD S.P.E.A.K.).

MIDD S.P.E.A.K. president Samara Gordon Wexler '23.5 told The Campus that she will likely never step foot in the establishment. While she has no complaints with the products themselves, Gordon Wexler said that advertising the shakes as "meal replacement" might be triggering for students struggling with eating disorders.

Gordon Wexler added that meals should be at least 600–800 calories, if not more, but Ignite's shakes are just 180–230 calories.

In response to a follow-up email from The Campus, Dumas said that while she and Jones are not nutritionists, they want to provide an enticing option for students hoping to supplement their healthy habits.

"Healthy eating habits are not just one meal," Dumas wrote. "You need to have routines in place the whole day. Healthy eating needs to be balanced with exercise. There is no one time fix. You can use our shakes as an after-workout protein recovery."

A student who went to Ignite Nutrition said he was asked to give his email address and phone number upon purchasing a menu item.

"Upon finishing my order, the saleswoman asked me to put down my email address and phone number," said Jerry Li '23, who purchased an energy tea two weeks ago. "I was suspicious, but she said that Ignite was running on a club-basis and would not send promotional emails."

The Campus reached out to Brian Carpenter, the chair of Middlebury Selectboard about whether he had knowledge of Ignite Nutrition's use of Herbalife products and did not receive a reply as of press time.

NADIA HARE/THE MIDDLEBURY CAMPUS

Ignite Nutrition opened on August 18 of this year.

COMMUNITY MEMBERS, STUDENTS HOPE TO BRING SKATEPARK TO MIDDLEBURY

By BEN WAGNER
Staff Writer

The group has been meeting in the Ilsley Library community room.

DEVIN SANTIKARMA/THE MIDDLEBURY CAMPUS

It can be hard to find a place to skateboard in Vermont — and even harder to find a safe place to experiment with new skills. Currently, most local skateboarders make the trek to permanent skateparks in Burlington, Vt. for a space to hone their craft.

There is no purpose-built skatepark in Addison County. But the Middlebury Skatepark Project wants to change that.

"We have been meeting monthly [since May] as a group at the Ilsley Library community room," Ethan Murphy, co-leader of the skatepark project, wrote in an email to The Campus. "We have had a regular presence at the Midd Summer Market raising awareness, selling stickers, raffling skate decks and most recently selling our very popular Middlebury Skatepark Project logo t-shirts designed by local artist Mike Kin."

Murphy added that the group has 160 members, including Middlebury College students, and has raised $1000.

The skate park would be a multi-use space, designed to widely benefit the Middlebury community.

"I think that having a purpose-built, contemporary, safe place to ride a skateboard, bike, scooter, wheelchair or rollerblades will benefit the entire community including the college community," Murphy wrote. "Our goal has always been to locate the park close to downtown to maximize the number of people who can access it without transportation beyond their skateboard, scooter, etc."

Ethan Murphy and the rest of the Coalition talk about skatepark plans.

The Middlebury Skatepark Coalition talks about the Project.

In an effort to determine the optimal location for the skatepark, Clark O'Bryan '23, an architecture major, spent the summer conducting site analyses in downtown Middlebury. According to his analysis, the best location for the park would be next to the town pool on Buttolph Drive.

O'Bryan said his interest in the project came from rollerblading growing up and having friends who were into skateboarding.

"Not until coming to Middlebury and getting more involved in the community did I begin to recognize the capacity of such a space to activate a town like ours," he told The Campus.

O'Bryan is not the only student working with the project.

"Middlebury College students have been part of the Middlebury Skatepark Coalition from the very start," Murphy said. "Many students attended our first informational meeting and have been involved ever since."

Devin Santikarma '25 and Bela Butcher-Salazar '25 are working with the project as part of the Community Connected Learning course this fall, which is taught by Kristen Mullins, associate director of the Center for Community Engagement (CCE).

> There is no purpose-built skatepark in Addison County. But the Middlebury Skatepark Project wants to charge that.

The partnership between the Middlebury Skatepark Project and the CCE was forged via the Middlebury Liberal Arts in Action Platform.

"This is a new platform that facilitates reciprocal relationships with community partners within the context of Middlebury classes and research programs. Community partners can share project needs and ideas; and faculty can share details of courses and research programs looking to incorporate community-connected work," Mullins wrote in an email to The Campus.

Faculty and staff at the college have also been actively involved in the Project, including Murphy, who works as a media production specialist in the Film and Media Culture Department, and Associate Professor of Political Science Kemi Fuentes-George.

O'Bryan emphasized the importance of the cooperative relationship between the town and college, which has weakened during the Covid-19 pandemic.

"Hopefully the skatepark would offer a space for both groups to come together and develop relationships to heal those differences," he wrote.

The Middlebury Skatepark Project is looking for the creation of a professionally designed and built concrete skatepark. Recent estimates from The Skatepark Project label the costs of such parks at $50 to $70 per square foot.

Murphy noted that while non-professionally built skateparks are feasible, they are often poorly constructed and not durable. He noted that the neighboring town of Vergennes recently worked on such a project, which became unusable just two weeks after its completion.

Despite the high costs, Murphy said he believes professional construction is the best strategy.

"A professional park is the only way to go because it will be safe, fun, attractive, and durable," he wrote.

> "Not until coming to Middlebury and getting more involved in the community did I begin to recognize the capacity of such as space to activate a town like ours."

Over the past two weeks, members of the project discussed a formal partnership with the Middlebury Parks and Recreation Department in order to utilize available grants and expand fundraising efforts. While the project has yet to formally ask the college for support, Murphy said he hopes that the college will notice the benefits of the skatepark and contribute through grants, fundraising, and other partnerships.

Currently, the Middlebury Parks and Recreation Department, in collaboration with Arson Skate Shops, offers pop-up skateboarding clinics in East Middlebury at a cost of $50 per session.

Both Murphy and O'Bryan highlighted the importance of a permanent structure to allow community members to experience the sport without having to pay for skateboarding lessons. They added that a key component of fundraising for the project is emphasizing the demand for the Park.

O'Bryan cited the Andy A_Dog skatepark in Burlington, Vt. as a model for the Middlebury project in terms of both its inclusivity and constant use.

"I absolutely anticipate more people riding skateboards, bikes, scooters, WCMX [wheelchair motocross], skates, etc. if there is a safe, purpose-built place to do it in our town," Murphy said.

There is no current timeline for the project, and securing adequate funding remains a significant obstacle. However, members of the project's working group remain committed to their cause.

"If designed and situated well, a skatepark is a magical thing: a place where parents feel safe having their kids stay and where they don't have to constantly supervise them to 'have fun,'" O'Bryan said. "Kids can learn to be self-sufficient, challenge themselves and sort things out without the overwhelming presence of adults to lead them the right way."

Editor's Note: Devin Santikarma '25 is the multimedia editor for The Campus.

A proposed location for the skatepark.

On living consequentially

Op-ed

Gwen Orme *is a member of the class of 2023*

If I am being entirely transparent, I'm not sure that I remember anything from my own convocation. After the most exhausting week of my life, I feel quite certain I slept through some of it or, at the very least, was too worried about my first day of classes for anything to register. So when I was given the chance to attend convocation two weeks ago — three years after my own — I was excited for what I hoped would be a moving, full-circle experience.

It was all going quite well until a member of the administration told the first years that, at Middlebury, they would be taught to lead "consequential lives." It immediately rubbed me the wrong way, but I hoped it was just an isolated poor choice of words. And then someone else got up to speak and it happened again. And then again. Every time those words echoed through Middlebury Chapel, I became angrier and angrier. In an effort to calm down, I tried to tell myself that perhaps it was just an odd theme the administration had agreed upon. Sadly, as often happens, the internet proved me wrong.

And there was Middlebury's mission — staring me down in bright, bold blue letters — "... we prepare students to lead engaged, consequential and creative lives ..." It hadn't been an isolated incident or a slip of the tongue, it was a carefully crafted, Board-of-Trustees-approved message.

On the surface, I can understand wanting to present your institution as one that will help prepare students to change the world. Yet, to tell someone that you will teach them to live a life of consequence is to imply that their current lives are inconsequential. It's to imply that one needs to spend four years and a quarter of a million dollars to be taught to live a worthy life — a life that means something.

As I see it, there are three main issues with this proposition. First, it is incredibly privileged. It implies that people who never went to college lead inherently less consequential lives given that they were never taught to be consequential. It suggests that many of the individuals who cook our food, clean buildings and serve other roles on our campus are less capable of making a difference. A notion that I believe could not be further from the truth.

> To have someone in a position of power tell you that your life is not currently "consequential," and only through a Middlebury degree might it become so, can be debilitating.

Second, it puts an unhealthy amount of pressure on first year students to excel because their success is directly tied to their worth. Imagine feeling like every assignment or deadline you miss subtracts from your worth as a person. It implies that if you woke up tomorrow and decided Middlebury was not for you, suddenly you would be less capable of creating a consequential life. This is a dangerous notion that adds additional stress to a school that already suffers from a toxic busyness culture.

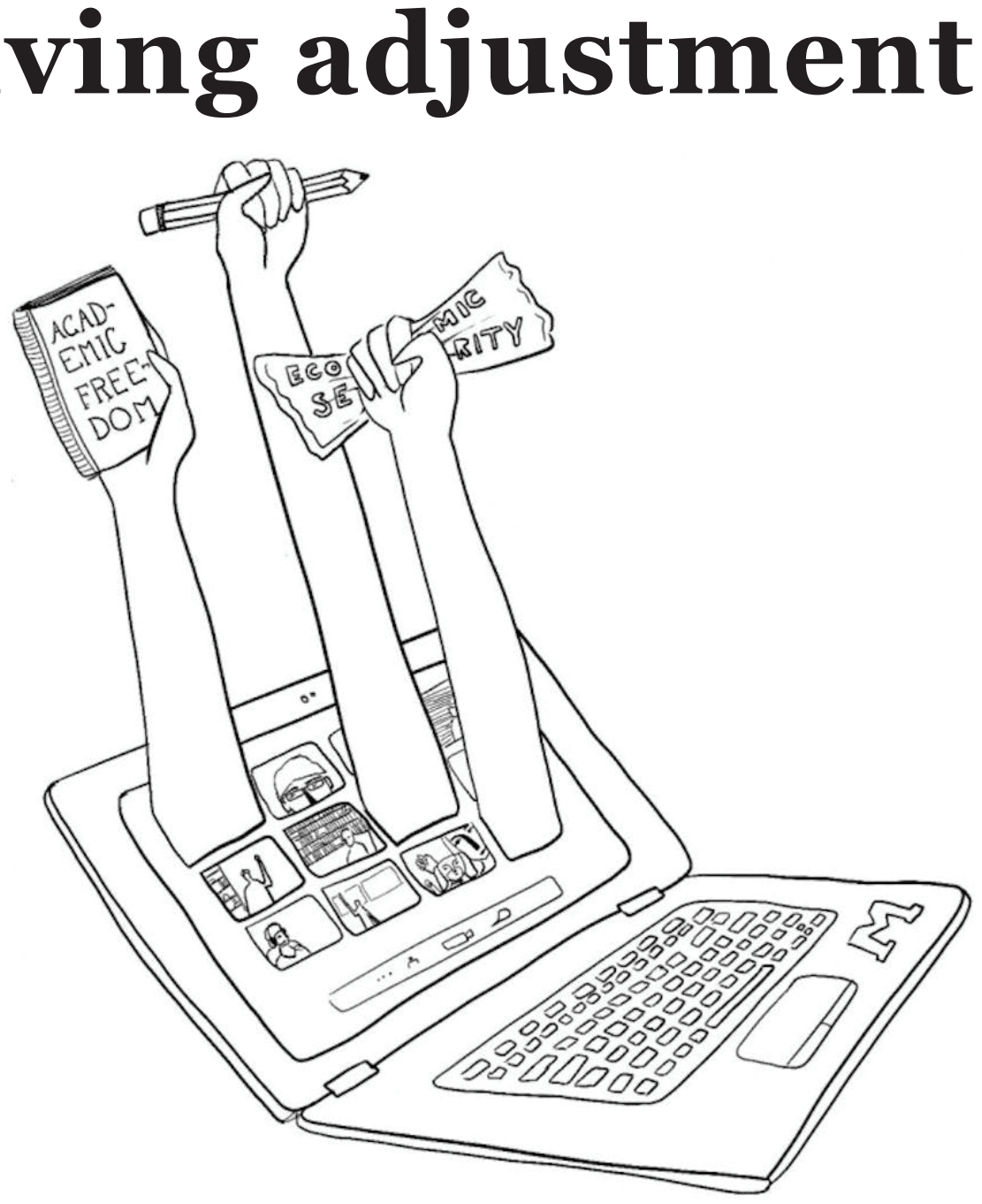
Finally, and perhaps most importantly, it implies that students do not arrive at Middlebury living lives of consequence and that only through a Middlebury education can one create a meaningful life. This is extremely insensitive, specifically for those that struggle with mental health and impostor syndrome. To have someone in a position of power tell you that your life is not currently "consequential," and only through a Middlebury degree might it become so, can be debilitating.

While I fear that the damage of spewing this message to 700+ first years (and the entire internet) perhaps cannot be undone, I will end with this. As so many members of the administration spent so long telling you, you were chosen to come to Middlebury for a reason. The reason, I posit, is because you were already living consequentially. It's because you showed up and you made a difference. Middlebury may want to take credit for making your life consequential — and while I concede that the skills you learn here can help you imagine more ways to build a consequential life — your life is already consequential. You change the world with your smiles, your acts of kindness and your patience. Whether you drop out tomorrow or become a Middlebury professor, your life is important. You don't need Middlebury to teach you to lead a "consequential life" because I guarantee you already are.

Employees deserve a cost-of-living adjustment

Op-ed

Members of the Middlebury AAUP Executive Committee



MADDIE JOINNIDES

When the Middlebury Association of University Professors, which has more than 220 members both faculty and staff, asked for a minimum 10% cost-of-living pay adjustment for all employees, we were being more than reasonable. At the faculty meeting last April, 87% of faculty agreed and supported a Sense of Faculty Motion. To get paid the same as we were in 2019 adjusted for inflation, we would have had to ask for nearly a 16% raise. Any increase less than inflation is actually a pay cut, not a raise. The average increase in faculty compensation was 5.4% in July, according to President Laurie Patton. With this in mind, nearly all employees received a giant pay cut.

Faculty and staff have worked under difficult conditions due to Covid-19 these past two and a half years, and yet we've been asked to do more for less money. Employees on campus faced added risk even with the precautions that were taken. Many staff took on more work and tasks that were outside their job descriptions, especially when positions were cut or left unfilled, all without additional compensation. Faculty also added more to their workload as numbers of students increased while the number of faculty did not. Faculty worked many extra hours to adapt courses to online or hybrid classes, which is not the same as just taking an existing course and turning on Zoom. Students have struggled both academically and personally, and faculty and staff alike have devoted additional time to providing support, accommodations and empathy.

So why are employees working more for less money? Because most of us have no choice. Inflation has reached historic highs and we face increased costs for everyday living expenses including food, gasoline, rent and other essentials. As we approach the heating season, rising fuel costs will strain budgets even more. Meanwhile the college rolled out a new compensation program that resulted in 14% of staff getting no wage increase at all. And the college just announced it would discontinue supplemental paid leave for Covid-19 isolation and illness.

With an endowment of over 1.5 billion as of fiscal year 2021, Middlebury has the means to compensate employees fairly. To achieve a minimum 10% cost-of-living adjustment would only take a small additional endowment draw — taking more than 5% to minimize a pay cut for overworked employees is simply the right thing to do. The endowment has already grown 25–30% in real (inflation-adjusted) value over 2019–2021. We ask that the college invests in its own employees. Not doing so means that even more faculty and staff will have to take on other jobs to try and make ends meet, limiting our ability to continue to provide the kind of education and campus life that students deserve.

Based on a survey of faculty conducted in spring 2022, 63% of faculty feel on the verge of burnout, 75% of faculty do not believe the college values their work and a staggering 78% are not satisfied with how things are going at the college.

Not investing in employees is a short-sighted strategy that will save some money now, but cost the college much more in the future. We already see students struggling to find and there are classessses and

We care deeply about Middlebury's future. We believe our future is jeopardized when cost-saving measures undermine the creation of a thriving academic community. That's why the AAUP is calling on the administration to commit to the following:

- Create a plan to fairly compensate ALL employees for wages lost during the pandemic. To not compensate for labor when the college has the resources to do so is exploitative.
- Create a plan to provide a livable wage to ALL Middlebury employees.
- Revise the current staff compensation system that arbitrarily pegs staff wages to contrived "market rates" that compares Middlebury to schools that are not similar to it in terms of size or the sort of work required from staff. Any comparison should consider both operating costs and revenues, including endowments. In other words, it should account for the ability of an institution to pay fair wages.
- Commit to a plan for employees to see their real-salaries increase over time.

Signed by the following members of the AAUP Executive Committee,

Jeffrey Carpenter
Brenda Ellis
Laurie Essig
Amy Holbrook
Jamie McCallum
Peter Matthews
Mike Olinick
Terry Simpkins

CONSIDERING WHAT IT MEANS TO AUTHENTICALLY INVEST IN MIDDLEBURY PROFESSORS

Editorial

The editorial represents the opinion of the Middlebury Campus Editorial Board.

This week, Middlebury's chapter of the AAUP published an op-ed in The Campus calling for a 10% faculty wage increase, which they state is still less than the 16% they would be granted if raises were correctly adjusted for inflation. They note that "not investing in employees is a short-sighted strategy that will save some money now, but cost the College much more in the future."

This begs the question, what does it mean to truly invest in employees and where is Middlebury falling short? The AAUP has outlined demands for fair and equitable compensation in line with higher costs of living, which we as a board stand behind. But wages are far from the only burden professors are being asked to shoulder. We as students may not fully understand the fiscal intricacies of what constitutes competitive faculty pay, but we can see other ways that professors are struggling, which in turn affects us as students.

One focal aspect of this is severely overenrolled classes, with waiting lists that often match the size of the course itself. In a Twitter reply, AAUP President and Gender, Sexuality, and Feminist Studies professor Laurie Essig estimated that each additional student enrolled in her courses amounts to ten hours of labor per semester.

To understand the scale of crowded classrooms, consider this semester's Intro to Religion course. (For context, there are only 13 currently registered religion majors.) This class, which had 32 students in Spring of 2021, now has nearly double that amount at 63 students. In addition, one editor noted that the senior seminar course in his major — intimate and discussion-based in theory — has to bring in chairs from other classrooms as the enrollment is double what it was when it was taught last year. Many other editors stated that their professors were asking students to drop their course if it wasn't absolutely necessary for them to take it so that students required to take the course — such as majors — could get in.

> As students, we're usually too preoccupied with [not getting into classes] to think about the undue burden over enrollment puts on professors.

As students, we're usually too preoccupied with the anxiety-inducing reality of not getting into classes to think about the undue burden over-enrollment puts on professors. However, first hand accounts of faculty burnout expressed by the AAUP make clear that students must rally behind professors, and not just because of what we'd gain from them having better pay, manageable class loads and generally higher satisfaction rates.

In addition to overenrolled courses, many seniors are struggling to find thesis readers if faculty who do research within their interest area are too overwhelmed with other responsibilities. As a result, some are ending up with third or fourth choice thesis advisors who may not have a background in that subfield. For example, the five senior art history thesis writers this term were told to be conscious of professors' workloads when choosing a topic. Multiple editors writing theses this semester noted how they felt limited due to a lack of available advisors.

> [Intro to Religion] which had 32 students in Spring of 2021, now has nearly double that amount at 63 students.

These crunches, though, are far from the fault of the professors. "I can tell you without a doubt that faculty and staff are stretched extremely thin," said Political Science Professor Kemi Fuentes-George, who noted that one reason for ongoing faculty departures is low morale. He also cited the exit of three Black female faculty and staff in 2020, which is critical to keep in mind when considering how burnout affects BIPOC, female and untenured faculty disproportionately.

On top of teaching and grading related stress, many students also utilize office hours to lean on their professors for non-academic support. However, taking on these mentoring roles in addition to teaching, research and serving on committees puts added pressure on professors, potentially leading them to feel as if they have to choose between their own mental health and that of their students.

The AAUP reminds us that these additional undertakings are generally not paid. They note that during the height of the pandemic, "many staff took on more work and tasks that were outside their job descriptions, especially when positions were cut or left unfilled, all without additional compensation."

> Taking on these mentoring roles in addition to teaching, research and serving on committees puts added pressure on professors. Potentially leading them to feel as if they have to choose between their own mental health and that of their students.

It is now clearer than ever that the college needs to pursue genuine investment in Middlebury's faculty: committing to enrolling smaller incoming classes, hiring more professors in tenure-track positions and removing the 5% cap from the endowment to prevent ongoing wage theft. If this doesn't happen, we will end up bearing the brunt of the costs the AAUP said would afflict the future down the line — that is, Middlebury is going to find itself with fewer and fewer professors to teach more and more students.

Thea Volpp

HAVE SOMETHING TO SAY?

The Campus accepts submissions of opinions, reflections and letters to the editor from all members of our community, every week. Pieces from students, staff and faculty are all welcomed for consideration.

Email Senior Opinions Editor

dsaleh@middlebury.edu

with submissions.

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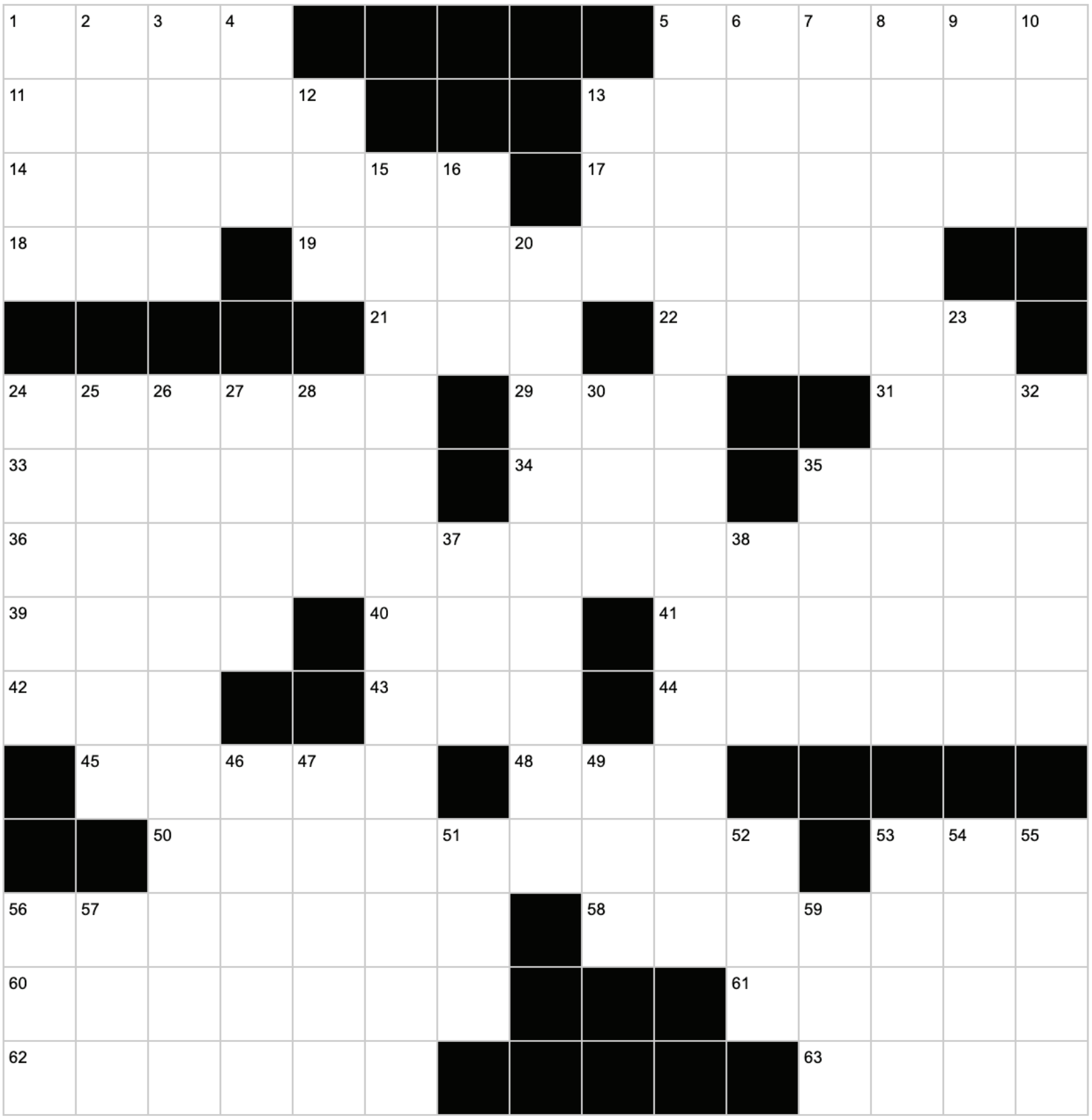
The Middlebury Campus

Crossword

By TONY SJODIN
Managing Editor



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***Solutions will be published online.**

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56 Genre of music first popularized in the 1980s by European bands such as Kraftwerk and DAF, abbr.
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"No Ocean Between Us" explores artistic dialogues between Asia and Latin America

ASA STONE
Contributing Writer

On Sept. 15, 2022, the Middlebury College Museum of Art gained a new collection and perspective with the opening of "No Ocean Between Us: Art of Asian Diasporas in Latin America and the Caribbean." The exhibit tells the stories of Asian migrants scattering in Latin America and the Caribbean through the works of Latin American artists of Asian heritage. It touches on the various struggles and triumphs associated with belonging to two different places, cultures and ethnicities with approximately 70 pieces of paintings, sculptures, installations and mixed-media works.

The collection greets audiences with a detailed history and map of the migration of peoples from Asian countries like China and Japan to countries in Latin America and the Caribbean such as Peru, Brazil, Cuba, Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago. The exhibition is organized into sections, each dedicated to a country in the Caribbean or Latin America. Within these sections, one or more artists are featured, each with a complex story to tell. Although the media of art ranges from paintings to woodwork to collages and even videos, there is one common theme that weaves together the entire collection: contrast.

The work of Japanese-Peruvian painter Arturo Kubotta uses contrasting colors and textures to emphasize the complexity of his two identities that came from having a Peruvian mother and a Japanese father. The contrast of colors and textures in his work tells that story.

Artist Kereina Chang Fatt captures her perspective with a piece of clothing. At first glance, it seems to be a simple white dress with red flowers. However, after closer examination, it can be seen that the bottom is frayed, almost seeming to fade away. Some of the flowers are even falling off, only hanging on by a single thread. The delicacy of the dress mirrors the delicacy of identity. This incredibly simplistic piece naturally draws the observer's eye.

Other works in the space address the difficulties migrants in the past faced during their journeys to the Caribbean head on. Because the trans-Atlantic slave trade was abolished in the Caribbean in the 1830s, plantation owners worked to draw Asian migrants to the region. They were placed into a state of indentured servitude, subjecting them to harsh working and living conditions.

One of the most vibrant pieces in the exhibit is a canvas painting by Bernadette Persaud Guyan called "Wales Sugar Estate—Latitudes of Grief" (2016–17). The bright greens, blues and purples juxtapose the dark story that the painting tells and contribute to the collection's theme of contrast. On one side are the fields of a sugar plantation, and on the other are the faces of indentured servants fading to skeletons. The painting details the struggles of inhumane labor conditions and the generational trauma that stems from them.

The exhibit presents the idea of contrast in other forms of media as well, such as textiles woven into a seaweed cloth, Peruvian and traditional Japanese Buddhist woodwork and videos of people from both regions of the world speaking in their native languages.

Joanne Doucette, one of the security monitors at the Museum, directed me toward her favorite pieces in the exhibit, which included the striking piece of clothing art by Chang Fatt and a piece titled "Maps 1,2,3,4." The name of this piece remained a mystery, as the sewn fabric displayed did not depict anything resembling a map. Doucette said this is what fascinates her the most about this artwork.

COURTESY PHOTO
The new exhibit is located in the Middlebury College Museum of Art.

On display at the entrance to the museum is a quote that reads, "There is no single correct way to look at and understand a work of art." This exhibit encourages people to see through a new lens and understand not only how art influences culture, but how culture influences art. "No Ocean Between Us" is a must-see at the Museum of Art located in the Mahaney Arts Center. The exhibit is organized and toured by an art non-profit International Arts & Artists, and it runs until Dec. 11, 2022.

Radio Roundup: Tunes to get you off on the right foot

By WRMC EXEC BOARD

Have your Spotify playlists become stale? Is your weekly mix just not cutting it? Maybe it's time to branch out and listen to something new. The Executive Board of WRMC, Middlebury College's radio station, has selected a wonderfully wide range of albums, spanning time and genre, for your listening pleasure. Check out these recommendations and let them become the soundtrack to your semester.

*RIYL (recommended if you like)

General Manager's Pick — Gennie Herron '23

Album: "Surrender" by Maggie Rogers
Genre: Indie Pop, Rock, Alt
RIYL: Phoebe Bridgers, Del Water Gap, Joni Mitchell, Madison Cunningham
Blurb: This album came out in July 2022, and I have been rocking to it ever since. I love the rawness of the lyrics and the intense emotions that Rogers taps into for this album. My favorite tracks recently have been "Anywhere With You," "Honey" and "Begging for Rain." Before this album came out, I said it was going to break me down and then build me back up, and it has done just that.

Music Director's Pick — Noah Hochfelder '22.5

Album: "Blood Lemon" by Blood Lemon
Genre: Punk, Indie Rock, Riot Grrrl, Hardcore
RIYL: Sleater-Kinney, Built to Spill, PJ Harvey, The Breeders
Blurb: I saw this band live when they opened for indie rock giants Built to Spill (with whom bass player/singer Melanie Radford also plays), and they completely ripped me open. For a three-piece band, Blood Lemon makes a ridiculous amount of noise — both musically and lyrically, combining sludgy, piercing riffs with cutting and empowering one-liners. Next time someone beats you to that booth you had your eye on in Proc, blast "Master Manipulator" or "Burned" at full volume through your headphones and rage on your merry way.

Programming Director's Pick — Chad Kim '23.5

Album: "Protean Threat" by Osees, Thee Oh Sees, Oh Sees
Genre: Neo-psychedelic Rock, Prog Rock, Noise
RIYL: King Gizzard & The Lizard Wizard, Hooveriii, Damaged Bug
Blurb: One of my favorite Oh Sees albums, "Protean Threat" explores the idea of apocalyptic optimism where genuine beauty and self expression thrives amid the rancor of a rancid world. With that being said, this album, like much of their hefty discography, sustains an intensity that endures the entire runtime and keeps you dialed in with each oncoming track. Listen to this in the sun. Listen to this in the rain. Listen to this in your brain.

Tech Director's Pick — Jonah Landsman '24

Album: "souvenir" by Jonah Yan
Genre: electronic, alternative
RIYL: Michael Kiwanuka, Leon Bridges, Cosima
Blurb: Jonah Yano's only full-length album to date, "souvenir" takes full advantage of his unique voice with minimalistic production and a wonderful, slow, rainy-day-listening vibe. My favorite tracks are "stones (tokyo)" and "delicate." I also highly recommend looking up "poor me colors show" on YouTube. And yes, I found this album because his name is Jonah.

Programming Director's Pick — Dan Frazo '23

Album: "Decide" - Djo
Genre: Bedroom Pop, Synth Pop, Psychedelia
RIYL: Litany, Post Animal, Thundercat, Tame Impala
Blurb: While the name "Djo" may be new to you, the chances are pretty high you've seen him on the set of Netflix's "Stranger Things." That's right, Steve Harrington (Joe Keery) is more than just a pretty-faced, peaked-in-high-school jock with a killer character arc. Joe Keery, under the stage name Djo, released his second full-length studio album, 2022's "Decide," as a beautiful evolution from his other work. The album sees Keery coming into his stride. Powerful synth beats are overlaid with winky pop hooks, not to mention lyrics with depth never before seen in Keery's work.

Pia Contreras

Social Media Manager's Pick — Georgia Millman-Perlah '25
Album: "Expert In A Dying Field" - The Beths
Genre: Indie, Pop Punk
RIYL: Snail Mail, Alvvays, Mannequin Pussy, Beabadoobee
Blurb: "Expert In A Dying Field" is New Zealand power pop band the Beths' third studio album. Released September 16th, this album builds on a very consistent sound that the Beths maintain through their discography. But "Expert In A Dying Field"Expert In A Dying Field incorporates more personal lyricism than 2020's "Jump Rope Gazers". This album digs a bit deeper into interpersonal relationships told with heavy guitar and powerful female vocals.

Concert Director's Pick — Luke Robins '23

Album: "Impostor Syndrome" - AG Club
Genre: Hip-Hop, Electronic, Indie Rock, Genre-less
RIYL: Tyler the Creator, Frank Ocean, Denzel Curry, Paris Texas
Blurb: The AG Club seems to find their voice on "Impostor Syndrome," not in a consistent sound but in the range of sounds woven together. Two of the album's singles, "TRU RELIGION" and "Kevin" showcase this range. This genre-play bounces from shout-out-the-chorus punk rap to in-the-feels electronic pop, and it does it all equally well.

REEL CRITIC: "Nope"

By JACK TORPEY
Arts & Culture Editor

The promotional material for Jordan Peele's "Nope" made it clear that the director's otherwise cryptic third feature film would be an alien invasion movie. Trailers and posters featured a UFO, farm animals being sucked into the sky, an isolated desert locale — everything but the little green men themselves. So when Peele opens the film with a chimpanzee brooding on the set of a television shoot, his hands and mouth dripping with the blood of the people lying dead around him, audiences might believe that an act of fiendish narrative trickery is set to ensue. How else would the writer-director famous for making the subversive, socially conscious thrillers "Get Out" and "Us" interlock such disparate subjects as aliens and a murderous ape? The problem with "Nope" is that Peele does find another way, and in forgoing the twist, he robs a film so rich with atmosphere and provocative imagery of the dramatic payoff that would have propelled it to greatness.

The film's storyline is best related through a description of its setting, the remote expanse of California desert home to Haywood's Hollywood Horses. The oldest ranch providing animal services to nearby Hollywood's production lots, Haywood is family-owned and -operated by the elderly Otis Haywood (Keith David) and his children, OJ (Daniel Kaluuya) and Emerald (Keke Palmer). It is here on the stark fringe of Tinseltown that a sudden tragedy alerts OJ and Emerald to a chilling extraterrestrial phenomenon surrounding their home. With the ranch business struggling to survive and OJ being forced to sell off the horses to a local carnival owner (Steven Yeun), the siblings seize the chance to monetize their discovery by recruiting a tech store employee (Brandon Perea) and a sagelike cinematographer (Michael Wincott) to help them capture on film the unexplainable events occurring in the skies above Haywood Ranch.

One of the marks of a talented filmmaker is the ability to create atmosphere, that intangible yet vital cinematic element that lets the audience feel what it is like to exist within the world of the film. This is never more needed than for horror movies, whose effectiveness depends so heavily on how deep a sense of dread they instill in the audience. "Nope" is not a perfect film, but in his third swing at scaring the hell out of his viewers, Jordan Peele has certainly perfected the art of horror atmosphere. The auteur takes a subdued approach to the genre. He dismisses rampant gore and unrelenting jump scares in favor of long, quiet sequences whose eerie calm elicits a paranoid focus from the audience anticipating a break in the stillness. It is a method that chooses deliberate, static shots over quick cutting; ambient noise over music; and anxious composure over flailing terror from the actors (Kaluuya's OJ might be the most amusingly stoic horror protagonist ever put on film). These stylistic choices by Peele level an oppressive uneasiness upon the audience, but they also give way to the undeniably pleasurable assurance of being led through a narrative by a filmmaker in near-total command of his craft.

And it really is near-total. "Nope" is a beautiful film, popping with idiosyncratic visual motifs best represented by the multicolored inflatable air dancers strewn across the dirt of Haywood Ranch. But Peele, who seemingly does everything else right in this movie, falls short in the one discipline that originally earned him the acclaim he currently enjoys: writing. "Get Out" and "Us" were complex, intellectually disturbing films with uncrackable mysteries at their centers; the audience could not grasp the full meaning until the final frame, and even then, unsettling questions lingered. "Nope," with its ape-on-a-rampage opening leading into a story about aliens, certainly gives the early impression that Peele is winding up for another brain tickler. The mystery builds throughout the opening act, crescendos at the halfway point, but then, just when Peele has conditioned the audience to expect a hard left turn into madness, it drops dead. An answer to the question of the chimpanzee's connection to the central UFO plot is provided, but it is a severely underwhelming one after such a promising build-up to the boggling twist that never comes.

As such, Jordan Peele's third directorial effort leaves the lasting impression of a film that came within striking distance of being a modern horror classic. It is certainly good, and any fan of Peele's work would be a fool to miss it. But to be great, a horror mystery like "Nope" will always need that moment of narrative brilliance that leaves a chill colder than any jump scare ever could.

"Nope" was released on July 22, 2022

Courtesy Photo

Spectator's guide: How to watch the Panthers in action

By NIAMH CARTY
Staff Writer

With fall sports firmly underway, here is a look at the home events in the week ahead.

Saturday Oct. 1 & Sunday Oct. 2

Women's golf: George Phinney Classic, Ralph Myhre Golf Course @ 12 p.m./9:30 a.m.

After placing fifth in both the Hamilton Fall Invitational and the Williams Invitational, women's golf welcomes opponents to the Ralph Myhre Golf Course this upcoming weekend for the George Phinney Classic, a two-day tournament. Their performance will determine their standing in the NESCAC Championship Qualifier the following weekend at Cold Spring Country Club in Massachusetts.

Sunday Oct. 2

Field hockey vs St. John Fisher University, Kohn Field

@ 1 p.m.

The field hockey squad traveled to Maine this past weekend where they took home a pair of wins against conference opponents Bowdoin and Bates. You can watch them work to extend their winning streak as they take on St. John Fisher University (SJFU) at Kohn Field on Oct. 2. Though they will have just returned from an away match against Wesleyan the day before, their game versus SJFU marks the first of five straight home games.

Tuesday Oct. 4

Women's soccer vs Clarkson University, Dragone Field

@ 4 p.m.

After three-straight conference match-ups, women's soccer (6–2) faces an out of conference opponent in Clarkson University (5–3–1). The Panthers traveled to Maine last weekend and took home a loss and a win against Bowdoin and Bates, respectively. Their match-up against Clarkson marks their final non-conference game of the season.

SEVEN QUESTIONS WITH JUSTIN BELLAND '25, MEN'S GOLF

By OWEN PARK
Staff Writer

COURTESY OF WILL COSTELLO
Justin Belland '25 tees off at the Ralph Meyer Golf Course in the Duke Nelson Tour.

Justin Belland '25 from Montréal, Canada, is playing in his first season on the men's golf team. In this installment of "Seven Questions," Belland discusses his introduction to golf, his journey to varsity athletics, and his hopes for the future.

Owen Park: How were you introduced to the sport of golf?

Justin Belland: I was introduced to golf by my father when I was about eight or nine. He was the person that bought me my first set of clubs, and we were lucky enough to be members of a course where I'm from in Montréal. Some of my earliest memories of playing golf are of my father and I going to the course on weekends to hit balls on the driving range.

OP: Has golf always been your main sport?

JB: Initially, my main sport was ice hockey. I played hockey in the winter and played golf in the summer. All of the motions and skills in hockey naturally translated to golf, and that allowed me to take my golf game to the next level. Eventually, I stopped playing hockey in my senior year of high school because it interfered with my academics. It was at that point when I realized not only that golf was a sport that I was really good at, it was also one that I could play seriously without having to sacrifice my academics.

OP: Did you always plan to play varsity golf in college?

JB: Not at all. While I was working on college applications, I wasn't thinking about playing any varsity sports at all. Trying to compete on the golf team was a decision I made in my first semester at Middlebury. When I got here, I realized that sports are a pretty big deal at Midd, and I said to myself: "Hey, I've played golf pretty competitively for the last few years, and I'm pretty confident in my abilities." I decided to email the head varsity coach for the golf team to ask him for a shot to walk on.

OP: You recently competed in your first tournament. What was it like playing there?

JB: So the most recent tournament — the Duke Nelson Tournament — was our first home tournament of the year, as well as my first varsity tournament ever. Because we were the hosting team, every single member automatically qualified to play. Unfortunately, we came up short by one stroke, finishing in second place to Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute (RPI), which was pretty disappointing. Second place wasn't terrible, but it was still a tough loss.

OP: What would you say were some of the most challenging parts of playing in the Duke Nelson Tournament?

JB: Golf is a sport where it's easy to start feeling vulnerable when you're out on the course. For me, this was especially true since it was my first tournament. Additionally, I knew that my scores would be posted for everybody to see which, from previous experience, can really ramp up the pressure to perform better. Honestly, I found that once I got out there and started to relax, everything just came to me naturally.

OP: Do you have any pre-game rituals or warmups you did for the tournament?

JB: I wouldn't say that I have pregame rituals. Before matches, I usually stretch and roll some puts. I like to get a feel for everything — my stroke, my coordination with the club, making sure my motions aren't too tight, making sure everything is in sync.

OP: Is there anything you're looking forward to in the future for men's golf?

JB: Obviously, the main goal is to win the NESCAC Championships and National Championships. I want to be a part of the team that will allow us to achieve those goals. We're on this team to win; that's why we play. We want to win championships.

PFL Weekly

By COLE SEIFER, DAN URCHUK, BEN WAGNER & SAM MCGARRAHAN
Podcast Hosts

This week, the hosts take a look at Middlebury football's strong 2–0 start to the season and the growing dynamic between quarterback Ben Tauber '22.5 and receiver Donovan Wood '24. After strong outings at St. Lawrence University this weekend, the men's and women's cross country teams look poised to hit their peaks just in time for NESCAC and national competitions. Field hockey gets a shoutout after continuing a strong start to the season, thanks in no small part to the impeccable play of the goalie Grace Harlan '22.5. Harlan now boasts a 50–1 career record between the pipes. Earlier last week, sophomore Euijin Chae '25 scored his first goal for men's soccer off a sweet corner kick, making it into SportsCenter's top 10 plays. Chae swings by the studio to talk about what that meant to him and how he ended up at Middlebury. Keep an eye out for more weekly Panther updates.

LISTEN TO THE PFL WEEKLY PODCAST ON SPOTIFY

Captain's Corner: Ellie Bavier '22.5, women's soccer

By CAPTAIN RUDOLPH
Staff Writer

Courtesy of Will Costello

Ellie Bavier '22.5 dribbles up the field during a game for the Panthers.

Welcome to the first of many installments of Captain's Corner, where I sit down each week with a captain of a Middlebury athletics team to talk Captain to captain about the role, the team and their life at Middlebury.

This week I got a chance to catch up with Ellie Bavier '22.5 and hear how the women's soccer team is doing this season. Bavier has been a starter for the team for quite some time and is hoping to lead them to back-to-back NESCAC championship wins and, ideally, a return to the National Championship after finishing as runners-up in the final her rookie year.

Captain Rudolph: When did you start playing and loving the game of soccer?

Ellie Bavier: I started playing in kindergarten, but I don't think that's when I fell in love with soccer. I was one of those kids that was picking dandelions on the field. I feel like I really started loving it in middle school. Once I started competing for club teams in my area and actually dedicating a lot more time to it, I was actively seeing my hard work pay off, which was obviously a really satisfying feeling, and I was getting to play with teammates that inspired me and opposing teams that were some fun competition. Then, my freshman year of high school, I realized this was something I could actually do in college.

CR: As a captain of the team now, how do you try to be a constructive leader?

EB: This is something that I thought about a lot coming into the season. I am a loud person for sure, and I don't really stop talking when I'm on the field. So I could have decided to be a vocal leader that's always shouting and yelling, but I think that alongside my co-captains, Elise Morris '22.5 and Cate Wagner '22.5, we each decided that we can step into different roles where we see fit. I've been experimenting with it and trying this year to be like a team mom to my lovely team. The role comes with its own responsibility of accountability and making sure everyone is in the same headspace. I've also taken on aspects of invigorating team spirit like making a warm-up playlist.

CR: What is the best goal you've ever scored?

EB: That's a fun question. I have a few goals that I've scored during my time at Midd, including an Olimpico, which was curved into the back post from the corner position, but the one that sticks out is my goal from a couple weeks back against Hamilton during a 4–1 win. That was a shot from about 25 yards out that went in the upper 90 of the left side of the net while shooting from the right side of the field. It being my senior season and having assisted in the game as well, that's one I'll remember for a while! It was a happy game for me.

CR: Do you have any unique pre-game rituals?

EB: Personally, I like to listen to a specific playlist of songs. Each year, I've picked up a new song that I like to listen to before games. So, for my fifth year, I've been trying to listen to all of them before each game which humbles me and gives me an appreciative sense of how long I've been playing. And, as a team, we do a locker room dance party 10 minutes before each game, and then right before our silent walkout we have a communal five-second guttural scream that's usually right outside of our opponents locker room, which is pretty funny.

CR: Besides life on the team, what do you love about Middlebury?

EB: This being my final fall, I'm really trying to take advantage of being in Vermont because usually during the season we get really busy playing soccer and don't take the chance to explore lovely and beautiful Vermont. Obviously, Middlebury is in such an amazing location, and any drive that you do is gorgeous, so I just want to take advantage of that. The other thing I love is that, honestly, there are some amazing professors here, and I've been lucky enough to have some close relationships with a few of them while exploring my own academic interests. I just appreciate the amount of care the professors have put into our education. Also, I love the arts scene at Middlebury. There's a lot of cool clubs and different things that people are passionate about. I used to be in an a cappella group, and those memories are some of my favorites from my time here at Midd.

CR: Which matchup should every Panther fan be looking to attend this regular season?

EB: Well right now every team in the NESCAC has been beaten, which means it is going to be very competitive this year. So, we really cannot take a single game for granted. Williams is one of our biggest rivals and the last matchup of the regular season. In terms of home games, that one should be a great one to attend, as well as our game against Connecticut College. [Those will be home games that take place at Dragone Field. Sunday, Oct. 9 at 12 p.m. vs. Connecticut, Tuesday, Oct. 25 at 3 p.m. vs. Williams].

CR: Do you have any specific plans for after graduation?

EB: Yes, I'm doing life science consulting post-grad at Clearview in their New York City office starting in September. So, I have some time until then because I'm graduating as a Feb. I'm going to try to travel a lot because I didn't get to go abroad due to Covid-19, so ideally I'll do the classic Euro tour, and then I'll try to do a road trip out west here in the states with my brother. I'm just trying to get in as much freedom as possible before I start work in the corporate world.

This interview has been lightly edited for brevity and clarity.

Eujin Chae '25 featured on SportsCenter Top 10

Courtesy of Brian Foley

Eujin Chae '25 changing direction during a game.

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"I did not expect my goal to go this viral and be on a platform that can reach millions."

His goal from the corner spot, often referred to as an Olimpico by avid soccer fans, is one of the more difficult skills to master. For Chae, it was simply a matter of practice.

"I have practiced this type of corner a few times," he said. "But I did not expect that I would be able to do it in a game."

Like most college athletes, the sophomore from South Korea has taken notes from watching some of the greats of the professional sport.

"My biggest role model in soccer is Andrea Pirlo," Chae said. "Growing up, I really admired his calm and creative playing style. His playing style is something I try to replicate when I play."

However, although players like the World Cup winning Pirlo are certainly inspiring figures, Chae says he finds his main source of inspiration much closer to home.

"My biggest influences in the sport are my teammates. Playing the sport I love with the people I love is the reason I'm able to continue this sport with the same passion I had as a kid," he said.

Despite his newfounds virality, Chae remains humble in his approach to the game, already looking to the rest of the season ahead.

"My individual goal is to become a more improved player than last season," he said. "Our team goal this year is to build upon last season's ambition, which was to win the NCAA championship."

Chae and the men's soccer team will next be in action this Saturday, Oct. 1, in an away game at Wesleyan.

Middlebury Cycling Team offers a wide range of opportunities for riders of all skill levels

By JACK MCGUIRE
Sports Editor

Courtesy of Alex Takoudes

Members of the team pose for a post-race photo.

The newly revamped Middlebury Cycling Team offers students an opportunity for bike racing, exploring Vermont and having fun.

The team has been one of Middlebury's most successful club sports teams since its inception over 20 years ago. The team's most notable alumni include Lea Davison '05, who was a two- time Olympian in the mountain bike discipline, and Ted King '05, who finished third in the 2011 USA Pro Cycling Championships.

Today, the Middlebury Cycling Team is still a force in the Eastern Collegiate Cycling Conference (ECCC). The team hosted an ECCC race "L'Enfer Du Nord" last April in collaboration with Dartmouth College in Weybridge, Vt. and Hanover, N.H. In the ECCC Championships last spring, the Middlebury team finished seventh out of the 40 teams participating in the competition, led by team President Alex Takoudes '24.5 and Annika Milliman '25.5.

Often, members of the club have extensive experience with biking and racing. Group Ride Coordinator Jake Freeman '25, for instance, biked 3,200 from Georgia to Los Angeles in one summer, and Takoudes has been competing in bike races since high school.

While success and winning is definitely a goal for the Middlebury Cycling Team, inclusivity is even more important for them. Because of this, novice riders can practice and race with the team.

"Even our racing is open to people of all skill levels," Takoudes said. "You can be a beginner and still race."

As long as they have a pair of wheels to ride on, students of all skill levels can go to races, which, in addition to being a source of competition, are social hubs for college students across the region. At most races, the 200 or so students competing will set up giant campsites and socialize around bonfires the nights before they compete.

"The weekend social scene is huge," Takoudes said. "It really is our social scene for the fall since we're not here for Friday and Saturday on campus."

While racing is an integral part of the cycling team, the club also offers opportunities for less competitive, more casual riders. The team hosts rides Monday through Friday, including a social ride on Friday where cyclists can ride slower, appreciate each others' company and take in the scenic views of Vermont. The team also hosts themed rides where all bikers will dress in a particular way; past themed rides have included a Hawaiian shirt ride and a formal attire ride.

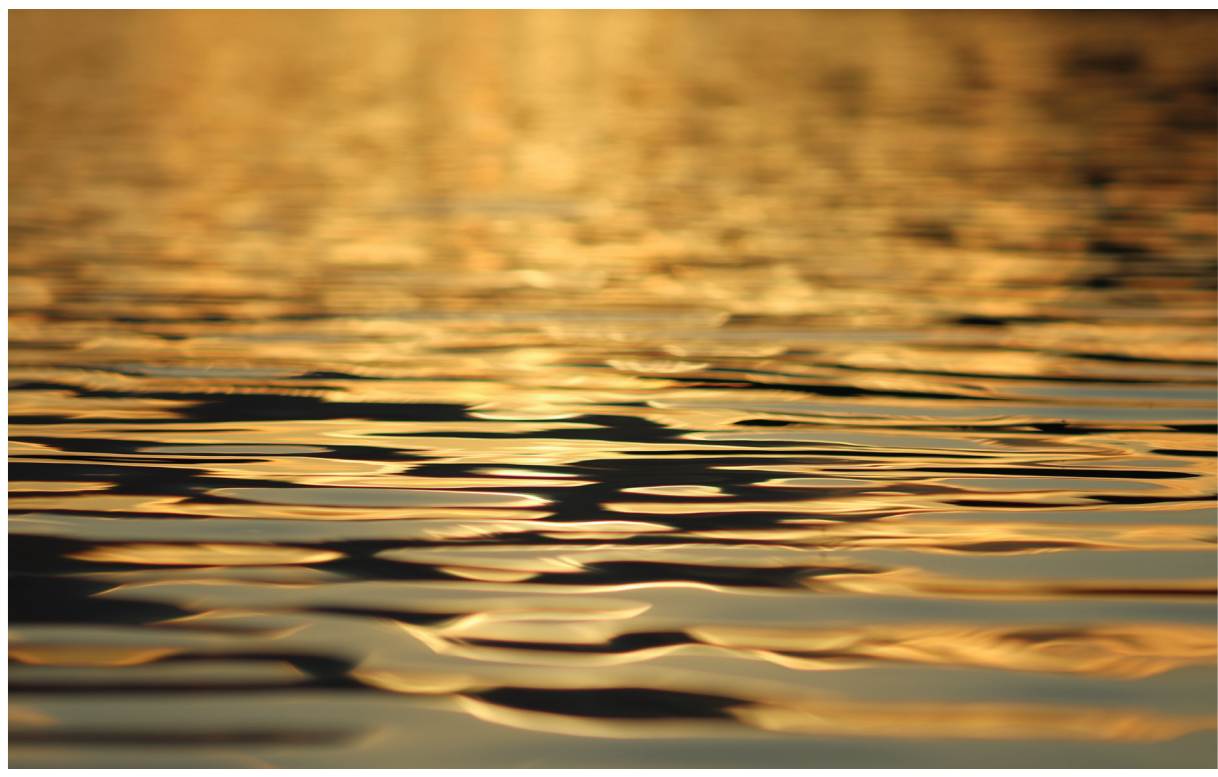
"[The formal attire ride] was interesting and got really sweaty," Freeman said.

Overall, the club wants to create a space where riders can relax and ride for fun.

"It's not meant to be like, you know, a high school track practice where you're just working out the whole time," Freeman said. "The idea is to go out there with other people who enjoy biking and have a good time."

PHOTOGRAPHER SPOTLIGHT: TOM NEVINS '25.5

By DEVIN SANTIKARMA
Multimedia Editor



Tom Nevins is a photographer who was born and raised in Middlebury, Vermont. A member of the class of '25.5, he is a staff photographer for The Middlebury Campus. In his free time, he enjoys bike riding on and off trails. I sat down with Tom after seeing his incredible talent for wildlife photos and discussed with him his journey and what it takes to capture the perfect shot.

Devin Santikarma: How did you get into Photography?

Tom Nevins: My dad got me a small camera when I was a kid. I started out recording silly films with my brother, though eventually I figured out how to take pictures. Upgrading to a proper camera, I took a photography class and it slowly started to become a hobby. The first time I did anything major with it, though, was at the Middlebury New Filmmakers Festival. I was 16, and wanted to be a photographer for the event, but they already had one hired, so I decided that I was going to do some volunteer photography work for them. The high quality lens I had used for the event didn't have autofocus, which forced me to learn to maintain my composure and use my own knowledge to make the perfect shot.

DS: I noticed that a lot of your work is in nature with animals. How do you get so close to them?

TN: It's a lot of working with the animals, and letting them know 'Hey, I'm not a threat.' For shots of the birds, for example, I couldn't come at them straight on or else they would fly away. My solution was to take my kayak and slowly paddle around them in an arc, gradually getting closer to take the shot. It takes a decent amount of patience, and even when you are patient, animals are always unpredictable and could run away or lash out.

DS: How has the setting you grew up in affected your photography?

TN: Growing up in the town of Middlebury has definitely influenced what I choose to photograph. Here, I take a lot of close-ups of animals and people, and I've developed an appreciation for older structures like buildings or waterfalls. I'm really interested in capturing rural life and small town life, and the moment by moment snapshots of it all. It's exhilarating, too, because I often find little things that I didn't expect — like going to photograph a building and seeing that there's a cute dog inside, or chasing down turtles that I find while going on a hike. Capturing these split-second moments, it's a way to memorialize a moment you'll never see again.

DS: Is there a shot that you're most proud of?

TN: Probably the shot of the bald eagle. I've always loved them since I was a kid, and I had to sort of chase it around the lake because it was very nervous around me. I got the shot of it literally seconds before it flew off into the distance and away from the lake.

DS: What are your plans moving forward? Do you have any words of advice to people interested in nature photography or just photography in general?

TN: I'm excited to do more with The Middlebury Campus and more personal projects as well. This summer, I want to set up my own platform in town, invest in more equipment, and work with the local newspaper. My greatest piece of advice would be to not worry about adhering to some imaginary professional style. Stick with what looks good to you, and the more you stick with it you will build a better sense of what you like to photograph and improve on that.

This interview has been lightly edited for brevity and clarity.

Photos by Tom Nevins.